

# Preparing for the Assessment Center

## Get Organized!

1. Set up an Assessment Center binder with a tab for each prompt/area to be assessed for your certificate. Consider including:
  - NBPTS Certificate Standards
  - Content Standards
  - Resources (instructional resources, textbooks, professional resources, etc.)
  - Sample Questions
  - Sample Lessons and/or Units

**REMEMBER:** You **cannot** bring your notes, etc. into the Assessment Center!

## Preparation Tips

Many candidates do not begin significant preparation for the Assessment Center until after completing the portfolio. However, there are multiple ways to begin preparing.

- Make sure you have experience with the targeted grade level(s) – if not, visit classrooms, review curriculum texts and talk with colleagues.
- Collect articles about the age group/developmental age span covered in the certification area.
- Read professional journal articles that address curriculum and pedagogy. Try to identify some of the “big issues” in the certification area.
- Be familiar with the rubrics used for the Assessment Center exercises contained in the NBPTS Scoring Guide.
- Consider writing sample questions for each content area and developmental level for which you will be assessed.
- Refer to the retired prompts on the [www.nbpts.org](http://www.nbpts.org) website

## Strategies for “Attacking” the Test

1. Practice your pacing by writing timed responses to sample prompts!
2. You have 30 minutes to answer each prompt.
3. Each exercise may have multiple prompts/sub sections. Start by reading the ENTIRE prompt to allow enough time to address all parts of each exercise.
4. REMEMBER! Once you complete an exercise you may NOT return to that prompt!
5. This is NOT an assessment of your writing skills! Bullets and lists are acceptable responses.

## **A Closer Look at Assessment Center Prompts!**

**Assessment exercises generally outline a student profile or outline a scenario for which candidates must provide a response demonstrating appropriate content and pedagogical knowledge. Prompts may ask candidates to:**

- Read and interpret student profiles
- Analyze and evaluate students’ work
- Plan developmentally appropriate instruction for students’ academic and/or pedagogic growth

**The Assessment Center questions are often implied in the exercise descriptions. For example, read the sample descriptions from various prompts and differing certificate areas:**

Teachers will show their knowledge of the reading process and ability to analyze student reading. They will be asked to read a passage, a student prompt, and a student response, and to determine the reasons for the misconceptions in the reading. They will also provide strategies to correct the misconceptions.

Teachers will demonstrate their ability to identify and address health-related needs of a given student. Teachers will be asked to read a student profile and determine the particular health issues related to the identified student and provide steps and resources to address the student's needs.

Teachers will explain historical circumstances precipitating a specific social movement, identify a specific strategy and how it was used to draw attention to the social movement and/or effect change, and analyze societal changes resulting from the movement.

**Possible questions could include:**

- What are some misconceptions you see a student's response(s)?
- What is the evidence of these misconceptions?
- What are some strategies you would use to correct these misconceptions?
- What would be an appropriate learning goal for this/these students at this time?
- Describe the science concept involved in the stimulus and its relation to a "unifying concept" in science.
- Describe an inquiry activity that would further the students' understanding of the concept.
- What instructional strategies, materials/resources, tools, technology, and/or materials would be needed to further the students' understanding of the concept. Explain/provide a rationale for your decision(s) and/or why these resources are appropriate.
- Describe the concept involved in the stimulus and three learning objectives appropriate to these students at this time.
- Describe a learning sequence and give a rationale to explain why this learning sequence will lead to the students' increased mastery of the learning objectives.
- What materials/resources will you use to help the students develop their understanding of the concept? Explain why these materials/resources are appropriate.
- Describe your method for assessing student understanding of the concept and learning objectives.